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## Testimony on H.B. 5285: AAC A Study of the Renewal Times for Occupational Licenses

Submitted by: Stephen Karp, MSW, Executive Director

The National Association of Social Workers, CT Chapter supports H.B. 5285 as a sensible first step in reducing the amount of DPH resources utilized in annual renewal of licenses for professions that can safely have multi-year license renewal. Such a step is in the right direction of reducing not only DPH staff time but also reducing the time and funds expended by licensees.

In the field of social work 37 states have two-year license renewals for social workers, 3 states have three-year renewal periods and 10 states (including CT) have annual renewal of the social work license. There is no indication that those 40 states with multi-year license renewal are any less protecting the public than the 10 states, including CT that has an annual renewal. We recommend that CT move to the mainstream of social work licensure by having a two-year renewal at no more than the current fee.

A review of the licensure renewal fees for the other 49 states shows that CT has the second highest social work license renewal fee, on an annualized basis, in the nation (Alaska being the highest). Of the 37 states with a two-year renewal the average cost for renewal is about \$120.00. In CT it costs licensed social workers \$190 per year to renew the license, significantly above the two-year average of most states.

In the 1990's there was a legislative task force that reviewed health care licensure fees. Senator Gerratana (than a House member) and I were amongst the task force members. That task force recommended greater consistency amongst the various professions fees and a reduction in fees for some of the highest paying professions. It is way past time that CT again looks at this issue and brings the renewal periods for most health care licenses into a more reasonable time frame and at a reasonable cost.